UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.109/1188
25 April 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION
WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

MONTSERRAT

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	GENERAL	1 - 4	3
II.	CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS	5 - 25	3
	A. Constitution	5 - 11	3
	B. Political parties and elections	12 - 13	4
	C. Future status of the Territory	14	4
	D. Position of the administering Power	15 - 16	5
	E. Action taken by the General Assembly	17	5
	F. External affairs	18 - 22	6
	G. Public service	23 - 25	7
III.	ECONOMIC CONDITIONS	26 - 60	7
	A. General	26 - 27	7
	B. Public finance	28 - 29	7

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
C.	Agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry	30 - 34	8
D.	Industry	35 - 40	9
E.	Communications and other basic facilities	41 - 44	9
F.	Tourism and real estate development	45 - 49	10
G.	External trade	50	11
H.	Financial institutions	51 - 55	11
I.	Assistance from the United Nations system of organizations	56 - 60	12
IV.	SOCIAL CONDITIONS	61 - 63	13
A.	Labour	61	13
B.	Public health	62 - 63	13
V.	EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS	64 - 67	14

MONTSERRAT 1/

I. GENERAL

1. Montserrat is situated in the Leeward Islands in the eastern Caribbean, 43 kilometres south-west of Antigua and 64 kilometres north-west of the French Overseas Department of Guadaloupe. It has a maximum length of 18 kilometres and a maximum width of 11 kilometres, and covers an area of 103 square kilometres. The capital of Montserrat is Plymouth.

2. The Territory, which is in the hurricane zone, was struck by hurricane Hugo on 17 September 1989, causing severe damage to the economic and social infrastructure. Emergency and rehabilitation assistance, mainly from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and from regional and international agencies, and local relief efforts have since contributed to achieving some degree of economic recovery.

3. Montserrat is mountainous and of volcanic formation. There are three ranges, the highest point being Chance Mountain which is 914 metres. It is recalled that a series of tremors were recorded in the Territory in August 1992 and that the Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Communications and Works had noted that several earthquakes occurred in the region annually (see A/AC.109/1137, para. 3). In November 1993, an official of the Seismic Research Unit of the University of the West Indies (UWI) located in Trinidad and Tobago, visited Montserrat to carry out routine maintenance of the seismographic equipment located in the Territory. Prior to his visit, one of the two installations had malfunctioned. 2/

4. At the census taken in 1991, the population of the Territory was 11,935. Details of the results of the census are not yet available to the Secretariat.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. Constitution

5. The Territory is administered under the Montserrat Constitution Order of 1989, which came into force in 1990. The Constitution provides for a Governor appointed by Her Majesty the Queen; an Executive Council, comprising the Governor as President, the Chief Minister, three other ministers and two ex officio members (the Attorney General and the Financial Secretary); and a Legislative Council, comprising a Speaker, two ex officio members (the Attorney General and the Financial Secretary), seven elected members returned from single-member constituencies on the basis of universal adult suffrage and two nominated members.

6. Ministerial responsibilities cover all areas of government business with the exception of external affairs, internal security, defence, the public service, international financial services and areas for which the Governor is responsible. Following a survey of offshore financial services in the dependent Territories undertaken by the British Government in 1990, the special

responsibilities of the Governor were extended to cover international financial services.

7. During the Governor's absence, the Speaker of the Legislative Council acts as Governor.

8. A Magistrates' Court, presided over by a Resident Magistrate, is situated at Plymouth. The functions of Registrar General, Registrar to the High Court and Deputy Registrar to the Court of Appeal are performed by an officer holding the post of Registrar who also acts for the Magistrate during his absence.

9. The Eastern Caribbean States Supreme Court (Montserrat) Ordinance, 1968, created the High Court and Court of Appeal. Appeals to Her Majesty's Privy Council are governed by the Montserrat (Appeals to Privy Council) Order, 1967. A judge of the High Court visits Montserrat three times a year to hold assizes, and an Appeal Court Justice visits twice each year.

10. The Attorney General is the Public Prosecutor and these powers are vested in him to the exclusion of any other person. There are several locally appointed justices of the peace with limited powers of summary jurisdiction.

11. On 16 July 1993, Mr. Frank Savage was sworn in as the eighth Governor of Montserrat. He succeeded Governor David P. Taylor, who was appointed in 1990. 3/

B. Political parties and elections

12. General elections for the seven elected seats in the Legislative Council were held on 8 October 1991, one year earlier than scheduled, and were contested by 26 candidates, mainly from three political parties: the People's Liberation Movement (PLM), the National Development Party (NDP) and the newly established National Progressive Party (NPP). In the final count, NPP won four of the seven elected seats, PLM and NDP won one seat each and an independent candidate won the seventh seat.

13. It was reported in March 1994 that Mr. David Brandt, Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Communications and Works, had resigned from the Government of Montserrat. He was replaced as Deputy Chief Minister by Mr. Charles T. Kirnon (who also holds the portfolios of Minister for Agriculture, Trade and the Environment). Mr. Brandt was replaced as Minister for Communications and Works by Mr. Noel Tuitt. In his letter of resignation, Mr. Brandt cited differences with the Chief Minister over the economic policy of the Government, including the introduction of the Common External Tariff (CET) (see para. 29), interference in the administration of his Ministry and the dismissal of overseas tourism representatives. 4/

C. Future status of the Territory

14. The position of the territorial Government on the future political status of Montserrat is outlined in the previous working paper on the Territory

(A/AC.109/1137, paras. 13-16). In summary, the Chief Minister was reported to have stated that independence was not a priority; as the Territory became more economically self-reliant, it would then be in a position to move towards independence. He expressed a preference for the Territory to become independent within a political union of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), an idea that is currently under consideration.

D. Position of the administering Power

15. The position of the administering Power on the future status of its Caribbean Territories, including Montserrat, was outlined in statements by Mr. Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on 24 November 1993, and by the Minister for Overseas Development Administration in June 1993 (see A/AC.109/1180, paras. 29-36). The Secretary of State declared, inter alia, that the relationship between the United Kingdom and its dependent Territories, to the extent possible, should be one of equal partners and that the aim of the United Kingdom policy was to help provide for economic independence of the Territories, in order to pave the way for the possibility of political independence when the people of those Territories decided upon it.

16. In September 1993, the Governor of Montserrat, during a radio broadcast in which he stated his many objectives as the new Governor, reiterated the position of the administering Power regarding its dependent Territories, and more specifically with regard to Montserrat. He stressed that the United Kingdom did not seek in any way to influence opinions in the Territory on the issue of independence, nor would it urge Montserrat to consider moving towards independence. He added that it should be the aspirations and expectations of the people of Montserrat to want to run their own country. 5/

E. Action taken by the General Assembly

17. On 10 December 1993, the General Assembly adopted a consolidated resolution (48/51), on 10 dependent Territories, including Montserrat, section VII of which was specifically devoted to Montserrat. In its resolution, the Assembly called upon the administering Power to consider all suggestions made by the Territories concerned within the framework of its review of policy and management of the Caribbean dependent Territories, as well as in the context of any future policy changes affecting them; requested the Administering Power to work towards promoting the economic and social development of Montserrat with a view to its attaining self-determination and independence; and noted the Government's expressed preference for independence within a political union with OECS. The Assembly urged the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, as well as regional and other multilateral financial institutions, to continue to expand their assistance to the Territory in the strengthening, development and diversification of the economy of Montserrat in accordance with its medium- and long-term development plans.

F. External affairs

18. The Territory continues to be a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and OECS, as well as the institutions associated with both groups, including UWI, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB). Montserrat is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and its subsidiary bodies. The Territory is represented at the meetings of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation and Economic Development, sponsored by the World Bank.

19. During the period under review, representatives of the Territory, as in previous years, participated in regional and international conferences and programmes organized by Governments, international organizations and multilateral agencies.

20. On 27 January 1994, in delivering the 1994 budget speech, Mr. Reuben Meade, Chief Minister, reaffirmed the Territory's position as a full partner in regional affairs. He noted that during 1993 Montserrat had been the venue of several important regional meetings, including OECS ministerial meetings on agriculture, education and tourism, a meeting of British dependent Territories Ministers for Health and the seventeenth informal Eastern Caribbean Working Group Meeting of Airport Officials. The Chief Minister noted that the Territory's participation in the first meeting of Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories and the European Commission, held in the British Virgin Islands in November 1993, was particularly significant since the future framework for collaboration between the Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories and the European Union had been established.

21. In underscoring the benefits that Montserrat derived from its participation in regional activities, the Chief Minister noted that the strong support given by regional Governments had enhanced the Territory's chances of receiving funding under the Lomé Pact for the Blackburne Airport Project. As a full member of CARICOM and OECS, the Territory would benefit from regional programmes of the European Economic Community. Among other regional projects, the Territory participated in the Regional Drug Service, the East Caribbean Export Development Agency, the OECS Natural Resources Management Programme, which provided training and technical assistance in areas in which the Territory was lacking, and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency.

22. In other developments, His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, paid an official visit to the Territory in March 1993. In April 1993, the former Premier of Canada visited the Territory at the invitation of the Chairman of the Fund-raising Committee of the Montserrat National Trust. In July, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Eastern Caribbean paid an official visit to the Territory. In August, a delegation of six United Kingdom parliamentarians, comprising one member of the House of Lords and five members of the House of Commons, visited the Territory as part of a tour of Caribbean countries and Territories. In January 1994, the speaker of the Legislative Council, Dr. Howard Fergus, participated in a five-day conference in the United Kingdom on the theme "Strengthening democracy throughout the world: electoral systems, electoral monitoring and good government". 6/

C. Public service

23. According to information provided by the administering Power, in 1993, the total number of established posts in the Territory's civil service was 779. There were still a large number of technical cooperation officers because of the ongoing rebuilding process after hurricane Hugo. Work on the new government headquarters was scheduled to start soon. The facility would accommodate most of the government offices.

24. The Territory continued to receive financial assistance for local and overseas training programmes from many agencies, including the British Development Division in the Caribbean, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Canadian Training Awards Project, and the United States Agency for International Development. During the period from 1991 to 1993, 53 persons received long-term training awards and 94 persons received short-term training and attachments abroad. A total of 55 persons returned after completing their studies abroad and were absorbed into public service and the private sector. A student loan scheme, funded by CDB, enabled 25 persons to pursue long-term studies overseas.

25. In his 1994 budget speech, the Chief Minister reiterated the policy of the Government to improve the efficiency and productivity of the public service. He cautioned that although restructuring of the service should not result in mass retrenchment, it must be recognized that the public service could not be expected to grow at a rate that could not be supported by the revenue base and general resources of the economy. He stressed his belief that training in the public service should be tied to national needs and development objectives.

III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A. General

26. The economy of Montserrat is based mainly on construction, tourism and related financial, distributive and personal services. CDB reported that the real gross domestic product (GDP) rose by 4.3 per cent in 1992. According to CDB, the major concerns of the Government are the need to strike a balance between the public sector taking a lead role in stimulating economic growth to sustainable levels and the need to improve overall fiscal performance. Public expenditure, mainly in infrastructural development, was expected to provide the major impetus for growth and improvement in the employment situation. 7/

27. Per capita GDP at current prices in 1991 was US$ 5,387 as compared to US$ 6,133 in 1990. The administering Power reported that the rate of inflation decreased from 9.4 per cent in 1991 to 5.4 per cent in 1992. 7/

B. Public finance

28. On 27 January 1994, the Legislative Council adopted the 1994 budget estimates without debate. Recurrent revenue was estimated at EC$ 42.8 million, recurrent expenditure at EC$ 42.5 million and capital expenditure at

EC$ 43.2 million. A total projected expenditure of EC$ 85 million was reported to be 18 per cent higher than in 1993.

29. In his 1994 budget speech, the Chief Minister informed the Legislative Council that the Government's concern over the state of public finance was a matter of public record. He noted that Montserrat must join CARICOM members in applying the Common External Tariff (CET), which allows goods from CARICOM countries to enter other CARICOM countries free of import duties. The acceptance of CET had necessitated a complete evaluation of the Territory's system of indirect taxation. The Chief Minister stressed that the Government would make certain that the introduction of CET did not place a burden on the poor. In that connection, he announced that the income tax threshold would be raised from EC$ 10,000 to EC$ 13,000. He cautioned merchants against using CET to take advantage of consumers and outlined measures to train customs officials and to educate the public on the proposed changes.

C. Agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry

30. CDB reported that, in contrast to other major sectors, agriculture repeated its strong performance in 1992. Value added in the sector rose by 18 per cent. Nevertheless, production was still below its pre-1989 level. 7/

31. In January 1994, the Chief Minister stated that there had been a further decrease in food imports as farmers responded to the efforts by the Government to increase the availability of locally produced foods. He announced that the objective of a further 10 per cent reduction in imports in 1993 had been achieved and, consequently, a net foreign exchange saving of EC$ 250,000 meant additional earnings for local farmers. The Chief Minister observed that the partnership with the farming community to achieve the Government's policy of optimal self-sufficiency in food production within five years, beginning in 1993, had resulted in a series of meetings throughout the Territory that had culminated in the first Farmers' Convention on 22 September 1993.

32. He also stated that a livestock census had been taken in order to create a database for the design of a comprehensive livestock development strategy.

33. It was reported in April 1993 that representatives of the Caribbean Conservation Association and the Government of Montserrat had signed an agreement that would strengthen the management of marine protected areas in the Territory. The project was a follow-up to the establishment of an artificial reef in the Territory during the 1980s. Under the current project, derelict cars and discarded appliances would be disposed of in the artificial reef area, to facilitate an increase in fish stocks by providing a breeding environment. 8/

34. In 1993, as part of a long-term programme of watershed rehabilitation, approximately 4 hectares of land were afforested, and over 10,000 trees valued at EC$ 100,000 were distributed to enhance the appearance of public areas.

D. Industry

35. The manufacturing sector consists of small-scale production units, including electronic assembly, textile, furniture, leather and agro-processing plants.

36. ECCB, in its report for the financial year ended 31 March 1993, noted that the manufacturing sector, which remained small, contributed 3.4 per cent of GDP in 1992. The rate of growth of the sector for the year, which was 2.5 per cent, followed declines of 19.7 per cent, 33.4 per cent and 19.9 per cent in 1989, 1990 and 1991, respectively. Growth in the sector in 1992 was attributed to an increase in the production and export of liquor, as well as increased activity in the electronic assembly industry and the production of brake pads. 9/

37. In its report on the Territory, the administering Power noted that there had been increased investment promotion activities both locally and overseas. The Washington-based Eastern Caribbean Investment Promotion Service had assisted in the visit to the Territory of an investment and trade promotion mission from North America. In addition, smaller groups of potential investors visited the Territory. It was also reported that an investment promotion mission comprising government and private sector representatives had visited Boston, New Jersey and New Hampshire and that the outcome had been positive.

38. During the period under review, joint ventures were made, property was purchased and employment was generated. Workers were trained in the United States and a single contract had resulted in 75 jobs.

39. The administering Power also noted that the electronic companies had benefited from subcontracting arrangements with United States companies. The process of developing a single product that could be identified with Montserrat had already begun. As regards small enterprise development, the territorial Government continued to work with private sector institutions, such as the Montserrat Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the National Development Foundation, the Cooperative Credit Union and the Bank of Montserrat towards the development of the sector.

40. In his 1994 budget speech, the Chief Minister, in highlighting the increased level of economic activity, noted that while there had been no major new developments in the manufacturing sector, there was a substantial increase in exports. Those included the export to neighbouring islands of chicken meat, lighting fixtures, furniture, building components and arts and crafts. While the levels of investment in the private sector had been lower, a significant development was the production of the first batch of agro-processing products.

E. Communications and other basic facilities

41. In January 1994, the Chief Minister declared that 1993 had been marked by a high level of achievement. Of the comprehensive list of capital development projects, 87 per cent had been completed or initiated. Of the 39 projects, only 5 had been carried forward to the beginning of 1994. The most significant of the completed projects was the new jetty at Plymouth. Work had begun or was in

progress on road repairs and rehabilitation, asbestos removal and disposal and water-related projects. The Glendon Hospital Redevelopment Project was also mentioned as a major project.

42. The Chief Minister outlined the Territory's Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) for the period from 1994 to 1996, which was geared towards achieving sectoral changes in order to create a positive impact on the macroeconomic environment. The total cost of the projects, which began in 1993, was estimated at EC$ 74.6 million. Expenditures of EC$ 32.7 million and EC$ 21.4 million were budgeted in 1993 and in 1994, respectively. Projects totalling an additional EC$ 38.7 million were also scheduled to commence in 1994. He noted, however, that the PSIP was a flexible management tool and would undergo changes in 1994 as the Territory's negotiations with the donor community developed.

43. In the same statement, the Chief Minister informed the Legislative Council that the Territory was expected to receive assistance of approximately EC$ 30 million for the Blackburne Airport Project under the Lomé Pact. In January 1994, the President and Chief Executive Officer of Atlantic Caribbean International Airlines visited the Territory and held discussions with private sector representatives on the establishment of air freight and passenger services between the Territory and other Eastern Caribbean countries. The President of the Montserrat Chamber of Commerce and Industry stated that such a service would assist small exporters and would also enhance tourism in the Territory.

44. The administering Power reported that the Montserrat Water Authority had completed one of three central service reservoirs, which would enable the Authority to transfer surplus water to areas in which shortages were being experienced. The Authority was also pursuing a project to reduce water wastage in the distribution system, estimated to be at 40 per cent. The Authority required assistance to update engineering drawings for the Territory, as well as to redevelop the pumping station, which was introduced in the early 1970s without stand-by facilities for emergency purposes.

F. Tourism and real estate development

45. ECCB reported that visitor arrivals in 1992 were slightly higher in each category. Visitors totalled 23,160, of whom 16,510 were stopover visitors; the remainder consisted of 5,564 cruise ship passengers and 1,086 excursionists. Despite the estimated increase, the hotel and restaurant subsector declined by 4.9 per cent. This subsector contributed 3.2 per cent to the GDP. Of the stopover visitors, 37.5 per cent originated from the Caribbean, 29.8 per cent from the United States of America, 13.5 per cent from the United Kingdom and 8 per cent from Canada. Returning nationals numbered 17,129. 9/

46. CDB reported that during 1992 performance in the tourism sector remained weak, although it showed signs of improvement. Despite a 3 per cent rise in total stopover arrivals, real value added in the hotel and restaurant sector remained flat relative to 1991, and net foreign exchange receipts from the sector declined by 3 per cent to US$ 9.8 million.

47. With limited hotel rooms available in the Territory, and given the emphasis on retiree tourism, some activities in the real estate and housing sector serve as an indicator of tourism performance. In 1992, an estimated 53.7 per cent of total visitors were accommodated in private houses and 22.7 per cent in villas, compared to 19.2 per cent in hotels.

48. The modest upturn in stopover arrivals was consistent with the general pattern in the English-speaking Caribbean. The protracted recession in the United States continued to affect tourism in Montserrat. Performance was also handicapped by the reduction in cruiseship arrivals following extensive damage to berthing facilities by hurricane Hugo in 1989. With the completion of repairs and expansion of port and berthing facilities, cruiseship arrivals were expected to increase significantly. 7/

49. In January 1994, the Chief Minister outlined the Government's policy on tourism. He stated that 1994 would be the year of consolidation and transformation for the sector. With reference to the report of a consultant group, the Chief Minister noted that the essentials of the Territory's policy would include the development of the Territory as an upscale destination and the promotion of an image of a clean tourist environment. The Government would also welcome the carefully limited and controlled growth of cruiseship arrivals. He added that a tourism master plan would be completed in 1994.

G. External trade

50. CDB reported that the reduction in economic activity had been accompanied by a decrease in the demand for imports, which had declined to US$ 31 million in 1992 from US$ 35 million in 1991. The result was a narrowing of the current deficit of the balance of payments, which had declined to US$ 9.2 million in 1992 from US$ 11.3 million in 1991. 7/

H. Financial institutions

51. According to information provided by the administering Power during the period under review, there were three commercial banks licensed to conduct business in the Territory and 22 offshore banks licensed under the Offshore Banking Ordinance 1991. The approval of the Ministry of Finance was required to purchase foreign exchange in excess of EC$ 1,500, and there was a levy of 1.75 per cent on foreign currency purchases.

52. ECCB reported that the Territory's money supply at the end of December 1992 was EC$ 96.3 million, which represented a decline of 1.2 per cent compared to 1991 figures. A contraction of 9 per cent had been recorded in 1991 when compared to the previous year. 9/

53. Total deposits, including non-resident deposits, amounted to EC$ 104.1 million, a decrease of 4.4 per cent from 1991 figures. Households, businesses and non-financial public enterprises increased their deposits in 1992. The foreign assets of the commercial banks were EC$ 5.9 million, or 35 per cent above 1991 figures. Their foreign liabilities increased by

65.2 per cent, however, to EC$ 9.7 million. The Territory's total net foreign assets declined by EC$ 2 million, or 12.7 per cent to EC$ 13.8 million.

54. Total domestic credit extended by the banking system increased by EC$ 4.6 million (or 4.9 per cent) to EC$ 97.9 million at the end of 1992. Almost the entire amount went to the private sector. There was no increase in government borrowing from the banking system. Its deposits decreased, however, by 46.5 per cent. 9/

55. According to the Chief Minister, the Territory's image as an international financial centre, which had been severely damaged in 1990 and 1991, has been repaired. During 1993, the supervisory and administrative functions of the insurance and offshore companies had been transferred to the Financial Services Centre, under the control of the Director of Financial Services. During the period, the Financial Centre had incorporated 23 new international business companies. With positive promotion and marketing, it was expected that the volume of active international business companies would increase significantly from the current figure of 70. The supervision of offshore banking was continuing with on-site inspections. The Minister reported that in April 1993, the Director and a bank examiner had visited three banks in Ecuador and, in November, they had visited seven banks in Panama.

I. Assistance from the United Nations system of organizations

56. Information concerning assistance from United Nations sources is contained in the report of the President of the Economic and Social Council on consultations with the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation on the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, 10/ as well as in the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation and coordination of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/48/224 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3).

57. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative for the Eastern Caribbean Countries continues to serve as United Nations Resident Coordinator of the operational activities of the United Nations system for the Territory. In his statement before the Fourth Committee on 18 October 1993, the representative of UNDP said, inter alia, that the Programme had focused its support for the Territories on human resource development, economic and social development planning, environmental programmes and tourism. As a small developing country, Montserrat, together with other Caribbean Territories, received UNDP assistance in preparation for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to be held in Barbados from 25 April to 6 May 1994. 11/

58. In preparation for the Conference, the Territory was represented at regional meetings in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. A representative of the Territory attended the resumed session of the Preparatory Committee of the Global Conference, held at United Nations Headquarters from 7 to 11 March 1994.

According to the recommendations of the report of the Preparatory Committee, 12/ the Territory would benefit from the voluntary fund of the Conference.

59. It was also reported that support was being provided by the United Nations Population Fund for the Caribbean Territories to participate in the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held at Cairo in 1994. 11/

60. In a related development, it was reported in February 1994 that the Government had established a National Committee, and was holding consultations nation-wide on the status of women in the Territory in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held at Beijing in 1995. 13/

IV. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

A. Labour

61. In its information on the Territory, the administering Power reported that the total labour force in the Territory was 6,120 in 1991 and 6,230 in 1992, and that the working population was 5,789 in 1991 and 5,597 in 1992. The unemployment rate in 1991 was 6 per cent, and 9 per cent in 1992. In 1992, the construction industry, as well as community, social and personal services, employed the largest number of persons, 1,580 and 1,825, respectively. The widespread rehabilitation efforts after hurricane Hugo ensured full employment. With most of the private homes and private-sector buildings repaired, the demand for construction labour fell and the influx of migrant labour was reduced accordingly. Projections for 1993 indicated that there would be a demand for construction workers in particular, as construction on several major infrastructural projects would commence.

B. Public health

62. During the period under review, the territorial Government attempted to meet its main objective of delivering quality health care to all citizens of Montserrat. An important feature of this policy was the implementation of the Glendon Hospital Redevelopment Project, which led to an improvement in hospital conditions. Training of nurses was undertaken in such key areas as critical care, operating theatre techniques and public health. As part of an overall strategy, plans were outlined for the provision of complementary health care in specialized areas as a result of cooperation agreements with other countries including Canada, Guadeloupe and the United States of America. During the period, the Government established the National Health Information Unit, which is expected to improve the data available for planning and for public education programmes.

63. The United Kingdom Overseas Development Administration funded the Health Sector Adjustment Project for Montserrat, under which planning and management activities would be strengthened so that quality care could be provided in an affordable manner. An adviser for the project, who is based in Montserrat and

who also services Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands, presented his preliminary report with recommendations to the territorial Government.

V. EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

64. Education in the Territory continues to be compulsory and free for all children between the ages of 5 and 16, and is provided at nursery, primary and secondary school levels.

65. In his 1994 budget speech, the Chief Minister stated that in 1993 the Ministry of Education had continued implementation of its reform strategy, which was aimed at restructuring the post-secondary educational system and creating a community college (see A/AC.109/1137, para. 70). The target of training teachers had been largely achieved. Twenty teachers had received formal training ranging from certificate to post-graduate degree-level courses. Training in technical areas was supported by the Government of Germany through its CARICOM programme. A total of 65 students had graduated from the Montserrat Technical College at the end of the academic year.

66. The Chief Minister commended the high level of achievement of the students at the Montserrat Secondary School in both Caribbean-based examinations and British-based examinations. Passing grades were recorded at the advanced level in biology, chemistry, history and English literature. Some 83 per cent of students received passing grades in economics and 75 per cent in the general paper; and 66 per cent passed overall.

67. As regards primary education, the Chief Minister noted that emphasis continued to be placed on teacher training and remedial techniques. A variety of initiatives were being employed to develop appreciation for music and the arts. Early childhood education programmes continued to promote the development of pre-schoolers in the Territory. Staff training, a major component of the programme, had been largely successful. According to the Chief Minister, more than 80 per cent of the staff had been formally trained.

Notes

1/ The information contained in the present paper has been derived from published reports and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations on 30 March and 6 October 1993 for the period from 1991 to 1993.

2/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 19 November 1993.

3/ Ibid., 16 July 1993.

4/ Ibid., 4 March 1994.

5/ Ibid., 5 September 1993.

6/ Ibid., 12 March, 16 April, 2 July and 20 August 1993, and 28 January 1994.

7/ The Caribbean Development Bank, Annual Report, 1992.

8/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 5 April 1993.

9/ Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, Report and Statement of Accounts (for the financial year ended 31 March 1993).

10/ E/1993/98.

11/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Fourth Committee, 6th meeting and corrigendum.

12/ Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 36A (A/48/36/Add.1).

13/ The Montserrat Reporter (Plymouth), 18 and 25 February 1994.